

THE
MUSICAL WORLD,

A WEEKLY RECORD OF

Musical Science, Literature, and Intelligence.

To know the cause why music was ordained;
Was it not to refresh the mind of man,
After his studies or his usual pain?
Then give me leave to read philosophy,
And, while I pause, serve in your harmony.

TAMING OF THE SHREW.

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THE CATHOLIC CHOIRS.

By JAMES GATTIE.

WE remember seeing in the papers, a year or two ago, a list of the places of public worship of all kinds in the metropolis, by which it appeared that the number of Catholic chapels had increased of late. Hereupon, as we understand, certain devotees among our Catholic brethren began to predict the 'Restoration of the Church.' Now, we merely allude to this humorous prophecy for the purpose of reminding these and other persons, that there is a much better way of accounting for the enlarged number of Catholic chapels, by referring it to the increased love of music; the public, it seems, have at length discovered that Mozart is still Mozart, wherever he is to be found; and that the music of Haydn loses nothing of its sweetness by being heard even at a Papist chapel. Hence the above phenomenon; nor would it be difficult to prove that the Masses of these composers are to be heard in more orthodox places than Catholic chapels—that is, in the drawing-rooms, and at the family parties, of the Cathedral clergy of the Established Church. It appears, too, that these works are becoming great favourites at the new Choral Institution, and we may shortly expect to hear of them at the Lent Concerts; although here it is to be feared their papistical title would be sadly in the way. Many years ago, we believe Sir G. Smart succeeded in introducing Beethoven's Masses at the Oratorios, under the name of 'Hymns.' How is it that a similar experiment has never yet been tried with those of Haydn and Mozart? Meantime, it is surprising that the Catholic clergy do not endeavour to turn the choirs into a source of revenue, instead of suffering them to remain as they are, a drain upon their finances. True, it may be asked, what probability is there of their being enabled to do this, when, as it is, it so often happens that they cannot obtain efficient persons for the duties; but we contend, that if the Catholics would assert the just claims of these places to be considered among the most efficient schools of musical instruction the country at present possesses, they would find plenty to acknowledge such claims. There are many who

would be not a little surprised to learn that three-fourths of the living vocalists and composers of any reputation, have received their education in the Catholic and cathedral choirs; yet, we believe that, with a very little trouble, a list might be furnished, which would establish the fact to the satisfaction of the most sceptical. Hence it may appear strange, that parents and others should expend such vast sums upon the musical tuition of those under their care, while such an education as the choirs afford is to be had for nothing. The music of Haydn and Mozart is its own teacher to all who come to their task with but an ordinary share of capacity and perseverance; and without these, to what purpose is all the teaching in the universe? But the choirs, alas, are no flatterers of vanity. If they are among the best nurseries of musical talent, they are equally summary in teaching dullness its own deficiencies; for we hold that natural talent cannot co-exist with an indifference or incapacity for the music of the choirs, and hence their utility in preventing the aforesaid contributions which we so often see levied by teachers and others upon female vanity or parental pride.

It is a truth as old as the world, that those who will not assert their own claims to consideration and respect, may wait long ere they get them acknowledged by others. Thus, few will accuse us of paradox when we maintain that one of the chief reasons of the prevailing indisposition among musical circles, to avail themselves of the instruction at present to be had gratis in the Catholic choirs, is precisely because it *is* to be had gratis. If the Catholic clergy would resolutely close the choirs to all students until a sum had been paid, in some degree proportioned to the value of the instruction to be received in them, we are much mistaken, if in a very short time they would not only be converted into a source of revenue to the church, but rendered ten times more efficient to the discharge of the duties appertaining to them.

One word before we proceed, to certain classes of purists not remarkable for the strength of their judgment, who may be disposed to denounce any attempt to decoy the youthful votaries of art from their religious duties, by recommending ~~an~~ early novitiate in the Catholic chapels, where, of course, attendance can only be given when their own communion requires it elsewhere. We would fain avoid a theological discussion, and will therefore abstain from inflicting upon the reader an enquiry as to when it may be necessary that religious duties should give way to temporal ones, or how far thousands are in the daily habit of making them do so, whether necessary or not. But we would ask the classes of people above named, how it happens that, instead of that unity of purpose in moral and religious duties, which is the best security for the performance of both, they are thus brought into collision, so that the one cannot be attended to without neglecting the other. In a word, wherefore is it that the Established Church refuses those facilities to the student which he is thus compelled to seek elsewhere? Before the denouncers give breath to their sanctified anathemas, let them answer these questions!

It has been said by a writer in the '*Musical World*,' that the introduction of the German Masses at the Catholic chapels, forms one of the four eras in the musical history of this country which have arisen

since the beginning of the century. If so, a better reason could hardly be given for an enquiry into the state of the choirs.

Five-and-twenty years before Haydn wrote his first symphony for Salomon, nature, through him, had asserted her rights in opposition to all learned pedantry and mere theory; and he had already thrown Italy into a fever of jealousy, by kindling that flame which was destined for a beacon and a guide to future generations, to keep them in the paths of truth and simplicity. Now, the early Masses of Haydn have, besides their intrinsic beauty, the same peculiar interest as his early symphonies and trios, in which his innovations were first disclosed. The general ignorance, both professional and popular, of the Masses, must be inconceivable to all who are unacquainted with what we hold to be its real causes. We have already touched upon these in a former number of the '*Musical World*,' and will therefore pass them by, especially as they involve inferences little creditable to the national judgment. Haydn, however, amidst his extraordinary disclosures, was accustomed, in his early works, to rely a good deal upon the system he was born to overthrow; yet we do not hesitate to say that a work of more perfect beauty scarcely ever came from his pen, than the Mass No. 1, although it is full of counterpoint. But Haydn's Fugues are as original, or nearly so, as the rest of him. If they want the scope and grandeur of those of Handel, there is a more constant flow of melody in them, and a sweetness and simplicity in the construction of the parts, which is rarely to be met with elsewhere. In their total freedom from rigidity and all appearance of labour, they call to mind what we once heard said of Lord Byron's versification—that it was like fine prose that had "dropt into rhyme." Those who would be satisfied of Haydn's faculty of interweaving melody and counterpoint, are referred to the concluding allegro of the 'Credo' of the above Mass, and the Fugue in the 'Gloria' of No. 16. Perhaps, however, his early symphonies afford better examples of this kind than his Masses. The lovely quintett in the 'Credo' of No. 1 is, we believe, one of the few things in these works which is generally known among musical circles; for the reader is to understand that the profession itself is not altogether free from that sanctified horror which every sound churchman must feel at encountering a work with such an awful monosyllable on the title-page. It is plain, however, from the way in which bits of these compositions are sometimes edged and smuggled into the oratorios and other concerts, that neither profession nor public can always restrain their unlawful indulgences.

Dr. Crotch says that Mozart's Church Music is decidedly superior to that of Haydn, and the Doctor has public opinion with him, although we doubt whether the greater popularity of Mozart's sacred Music among the few who are acquainted with the works in question, is owing to its superior beauty, supposing it to exist. These compositions certainly afford no very striking distinctions of style. Mozart, however, besides taking Haydn's new style for the foundation of his own, would occasionally make free with his contemporary's subjects, and amplify and adorn them from the stores of his own imagination. A glaring example of this, occurs in the celebrated Mass No. 12. In an Art connected with the passions by a tenure at once so deep, subtle, and mys-

terious as that of Music, it will always be difficult to trace with minuteness and accuracy, the Passions, Feelings, and Associations which have inspired the works of its greatest Masters.* Handel has been called the Jupiter of Music. If we are to suppose Mozart's mind to have been under the influence of any particular deity, it was probably that of the boy-god, Cupid. In calling his music, *par excellence*, the Music of Love, we do not mean to attribute to the inspiration of this passion all, or nearly all, of his finest things, although it was certainly a predominant one in his nature. But Haydn's melodies, burnt into the memory of the hearer as they are with the true alchemy of genius, and embalmed in their own sweetness as they must ever remain, it is still less easy to trace to the thoughts from which they sprung. Now, it is this more abstract character of Haydn's music in general that will always keep it behind that of Mozart in public opinion. In the Masses however the preference most likely arises from the less frequent recurrence of the latter to the resources of counterpoint, and the more simple means by which he produces his effects. And yet in the number of beautiful melodies to be found in these works, we should certainly be inclined to give the precedence to Haydn. Nos. 1, 4, and 16, are among the most prolific in this respect. Here the melodies occur with a beauty and profusion truly *Haydnesque*. The finest of Mozart's masses are the first, third, twelfth, and the Requiem. With the rest we have but a very slight acquaintance, except with the second and fifth, which however are inferior to the others above named. Let the reader compare the splendid Miserere of Mozart's 12th, with the parallel movement in Haydn's 16th (his last and finest) and award the preference if he can.

There is another kind of music peculiar to the Catholic Chapels which our horror of the Pope has hitherto kept us in ignorance of; that is, the Gregorian Masses and Chants: upon this subject we shall take the liberty of quoting from a contemporary:

"Beautiful as the Chants and Psalmody of the Established Church undoubtedly are, they are yet far behind those of the ancient church in depth and grandeur of conception, in simplicity and pathos. The Gregorian Chants speak truly with the voice of nature, for the feelings they awaken lie in the deepest recesses of the heart, and when once

* There is a class of critics who are for describing a composer's ideas, much as they would do the person of their mistress, or the furniture of a room. We once heard of one of these personages, who gravely asserted, that some passage in Mozart, was 'like a nymph's dancing hair'—why not like his own dancing pumps? The image of a dancing *nymph*, (omitting any particular mention of her hair) might certainly convey an impression of grace and vivacity; but if it was meant that the passage was lively and graceful, why not have said so in two words? In short, the fallacy of this sort of verbiage, must be obvious when it is considered that musical impressions are generally found to be vague and undefinable in proportion to their depth and power. We have heard of a lady, who, although she was in the habit of being affected to tears by Mozart's melodies, could never give any analysis of her feelings. Could the woman who fell senseless at an effect of one of Haydn's symphonies; or Mozart, when he was thrown into convulsions at discordant sounds, have said what were the images or ideas thus excited in their minds, and which produced such sudden and appalling effects? We doubt whether either could have given any account of the matter beyond what every body knew—that they were under the influence of an impression which absorbed and stunned their being into temporary death. We remember reading an account of a woman who had been an idiot from her birth, and yet, who was always excited to a pitch of almost frantic delight at the sound of music. Now, if this unfortunate creature, who had never had another passion or idea, had been asked to describe her sensations; her reply (supposing she had been able to give any at all) would probably have been in the style of the blind man, who, when asked what the colour of red was like, replied, that it resembled the sound of a trumpet.

understood, they not only captivate the ear of the hearer, but, as has been said of Shakspeare's ideas, become identified with his very being: all who have become early and well acquainted with them, will acknowledge this. We do not mean to contend that a great deal of the Gregorian music is not exceedingly quaint, crude and unintelligible. Even the finest portions of it will require some little exercise of patience on the part of the student before their extraordinary power will fully disclose itself. Having conceded thus much, it may be added that he, who having had sufficient time to become familiarized with the unmetrical and obsolete quaintness of the style, should still find nothing but ruggedness and monotony in the Gregorian Chants, may be very safely pronounced unsusceptible of any musical impressions but those of the most ordinary and common-place kind."

(*To be continued.*)

THE PRESENT STATE OF MUSIC IN HOLLAND.

It was humorously said, in a review of the "Batavian Anthology," that if George the Fourth had been told by the Dutch ambassador, that there was such a thing as poetry in Holland, he would only have been restrained by that politeness for which he was celebrated, from retorting upon his informant in the language used by an eastern monarch, when informed by the English envoy, that in his native country the waters became so solid in winter, that persons walked upon them. "Walk upon the water!" said this wise man of the east,—*"That's a lie!"*

Strange as it might have seemed to the oriental potentate, we can occasionally walk dry-shod over our streams,—strange as it might have seemed to George the Fourth, there have been, and are still, good poets in Holland; and, strange as it may seem to our readers, there is still in that country other music than the croaking of frogs: and we now propose to make them acquainted with the musical sayings and doings of Holland and the Hollanders.

Many causes are there why foreigners remain in ignorance of the musical matters of the Dutch; not the least influential of these, is the language, with which comparatively few are acquainted who are not natives of the country. Another is, that the artists of Holland seldom quit their own country in search of improvement in their art, or in artistic and professional tours, while their compositions are, moreover, mostly written on subjects of temporary interest, and, therefore, laid aside, as soon as that interest is no longer felt. But to proceed to matters of fact. The principal composers of the present day, are Fodor, Wilms, Bertelman, and Van Bree.

C. A. Fodor is now about sixty years of age, a member of the Royal Institution, and honorary member of the Society for the Promotion of Music; he was formerly Director of the Orchestra in the concerts of the Felix Meritis Society, as well as of the Public Subscription Concerts, given in the German theatre, under the name of *Eruditio Musica*. The former situation he resigned some years, and the last named concerts have been for some time abandoned from want of encouragement.

Fodor is a teacher of music, and an accomplished piano-forte player; and his public performances were formerly listened to with great delight. Several of his most admired sonatas, variations, and concertos, for the piano-forte, have been printed: besides these, he has composed overtures, symphonies, and occasional cantatas (*Gelegenheit-Cantaten*.) His style resembles that of Pleyel. His last important work was an opera, "Numa Pompilius," the words of which were also written by him. It was performed at the Dutch theatre, but failed completely; this disappointment is supposed to be the cause why he no longer composes.

J. B. Wilms is a German by birth, but has been the greater part of his life a resident in Holland; he is now between fifty and sixty years of age, member of the Royal Institution, honorary member of the Society for the Promotion of Music, &c. A distinguished performer on the piano-forte, on which he formerly played in public with great success. He has, as a teacher of that instrument, and of composition, produced a number of celebrated pupils. Besides sonatas, variations, and concertos, for the piano-forte, he has written several symphonies and overtures, which have been printed in Germany. His style, which bears some resemblance to Steibelt's, is purer, and more in accordance with the taste of the present day, than that of Fodor: many of his works are still performed and admired. Every year he composes a jubilee cantata in honor of the present Society of Learning, which is performed at the instant, and then laid aside. He must have composed nearly fifty of these. In these works we must admit that the voice parts are well arranged, the instrumentation carefully worked up, and that there is a tolerable display of originality in them—yet, there is a certain dryness and coldness about them, which cannot be denied, but which may be, perhaps, the fault of the poems to which the music is arranged. His most celebrated work is the national song, 'Wien Neerland bloed,' the words of which were written by Follens, and which was honored with the prize, in 1826. Under different circumstances, had he been differently brought up, and his taste been more carefully directed, the natural talents with which he is gifted, would have raised to a far greater eminence the name of Wilms.

J. H. Bertelman is now about fifty years of age, member of the Royal Institution, honorary member of the Society for the Promotion of Music, and teacher of the present Royal Academy of Music; is indebted to his restless desire for knowledge, and his constant study, for a deep and clear insight into every branch, theoretical, practical, and creative, of the philosophy of music. As a theorist, especially in the doctrines of composition, the first place is unanimously assigned to him; and an important work upon the theory of music, which he has just completed, is looked for with considerable anxiety. As a practical teacher of the violin, piano-forte, and singing, he is universally admired and beloved. But, although an accomplished performer on both those instruments, an insuperable diffidence and shyness has kept him from a public display of his powers. As a composer, he has been, for some years, the decided favorite of the public. Of dances, variations, marches, and works of that nature, he has written and published but little, not caring to waste his strength upon such trifles. In his great vocal compositions, "Haydn appears to have been the model on which he has

formed his style. The same division, the same investiture and preparation of the airs, duets, choruses, fugues, &c.; the same clearness and unity; the same kindly, deep feeling of devotion, pervade his works. Indeed, this resemblance of characteristics is so striking, that it cannot fail to injure Bertelman's reputation for originality; although nothing like slavish imitation is to be found in his works. Many of his occasional cantatas, some of joyous, some of a mournful character, have been from time to time performed at private concerts. Besides these he has written a mass, which has been buried for some years in the choral archives of the Catholic church at Amsterdam, where musical masses are no longer performed. His requiem for three male voices, with an orchestral accompaniment, is decidedly a remarkable work, and full of deep feeling. It will shortly be published by Theune, the music publisher at Amsterdam, and deserves to be made known to all lovers of really classical music. His last great work, is 'The Battle of Nienwpoort,' a dramatic cantata written by H. H. Klyn, a favorite poet of the present day. The chief personages in this piece, are Prince Mauritz of Orange, Commander of the Army of the United Netherlands, (Tenor) his brother, Frederick Henry, (Bass) and Mendoza, Commander of the Spanish Forces. Remarkably powerful and charming are a grand aria for a tenor, a duet, tenor and bass, two very characteristic choruses of soldiers, and the finale—the song of victory of the Netherlanders, in which the wives of the conquerors mingle their voices. It also exhibits some admirably successful pieces of musical painting. Upon every repeated performance of this cantata in the concert room of the Felix Meritis Society, was the most enthusiastic delight manifested, in unanimous shouts of applause. It is unfortunate, that this concert is too small to allow this colossal work to be heard to advantage. Much, and that too of importance, would be obtained from this composer, were he not impeded, by the necessity of giving lessons in music, that he may earn the means of supporting his numerous family. It is said that he composed, some years since, a Dutch opera.

J. B. van Bree is now about thirty-five years of age, honorary member of the Society for the Promotion of Music, director of the orchestra to the Felix Meritis Society, &c., is, in his artistical formation, as well as in his works, much more universal than those composers we have already named. He might, indeed, be named the Beethoven of Holland, not only on account of his universality, but also from his strenuous endeavours to walk in the path which that great master trod before him. Van Bree displays rich powers of invention, energy, and flights of genius, but does not always know how to sustain himself on high. Oftentimes in his works, a grand idea is followed immediately by some trivial and common thought. This is especially remarkable in some of his overtures, when the cantabile appears too trifling by the side of the splendid upward-flights of the *forte-tutti* passages. In his best symphonies, however, a greater unity prevails. He has also written some concertos and variations for the violin, and a concertante for two violins, which afford perfect gratification as often as they are performed. One of his quartetts for stringed instruments, has been published in Germany. Of his performance on the violin, we have already spoken: for the piano, on which he is a still more excellent performer, he has composed several

pieces, brilliant waltzes, &c. which are much admired, besides Pot-Pourris, Variations, &c. for the horn, violoncello, &c., all clever and well suited to the several instruments.

Among his vocal compositions, the principal are some original Dutch national songs, and a cantata for a tenor voice, in imitation of Beethoven's 'Adelaida,' entitled 'Adolph at the grave of Maria.' He has written also, 'Columbus, or the Discoverer of America,' the poem by de Nos, a cantata for a bass voice solo, and chorus of men's voices; the first part of another cantata for solo voices and choruses—'Lord Byron,' the poem being by Meyer; an operetta by Foppe, which, after several rehearsals at the Dutch theatre, was withdrawn, in consequence of some disagreement with the managers; finally, a French opera, 'Le Bandit,' by the theatrical singer, Marquillon, written expressly for the French theatre. His grand opera, 'Sappho,' in five acts, written by the favorite poet of the people, Van Lennex, was, when produced in 1833, performed on many successive nights with great applause. The nature of the piece, however, which was poorly written, and in imitation of the so-called classical French tragedies, sufficiently accounts for the opera, when revived in the following winter, not meeting with the favorable reception it had formerly encountered, and which the merits of the skilfully-composed music fully deserved. For instance, the play contains fourteen long undramatic choruses, and the haughty Sappho is made a very pitiful and lacrymose heroine. The composer, moreover, was compelled to clip the wings of his fancy, that he might not overpower the limited resources of the company who were to perform his work. It may, too, be objected, to the style of it, that it is altogether better adapted to the concert room; than to the theatre.

A mass for a solo voice and chorus, with orchestral accompaniments, is certainly the grandest and most elevated work which this writer has yet completed; it was purchased by the Society for the Promotion of Music, and published by them. In the 'Leipsig Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung,' and in the 'Cecilia,' this work has been reviewed in the most flattering terms. He has written for the Church, besides this, several Benedictions, or *Tantum ergos*; also one for Haydn's organ mass, and one to Beethoven's 'Missa Solemnis.' In the two last he has succeeded in working up and connecting so beautifully and appropriately some of the leading ideas of each of these masses, that they may well be regarded as very worthy introductions to those admirable works.

Finally, we must mention two pieces of declamation composed by him, a style of composition (like Carl Maria von Weber's 'Der erste Ton,'—'The first Tone,' and Anselmus Weber's 'Gang nach dem Eisenhammer,'—'Road to the Iron Foundry') which is greatly in vogue at Amsterdam. The first is called 'Der Mensch in den vier zeitaltern seines Lebens,' ('The four ages of Man') written by Foppe, and the other, 'Van Speyk's heldentod,' ('The heroic Death of Van Speyk') by Professor Kinker. Both these works have been repeatedly performed, and received upon every occasion with great satisfaction. The accompaniment is throughout extremely appropriate, imaginative, and dramatic; while the choruses which are introduced, produce a powerful effect.

We must conclude for the present,—but shall next week return to the subject.

NATIONAL MELODIES.

To the Editor of the Musical World.

SIR,—Some say, that the English have no style of music which they may call their own, no 'national melodies,' whereas the Welsh, Scotch, Irish, &c. are allowed to possess a vast many. Now, I should like to know, to whom belong 'Rule Britannia,' 'Britons, strike home,' also Purcell's, Shield's, Dibdin's songs? If these be not English, to what country do they belong? But, my chief object in addressing you, is, touching National Melodies, so called; and to enquire whether those airs ought not to be considered national, which are composed by a *native* of the land, in which they are played and sung, having characteristic words, on local subjects adopted to them. Many airs which are called national, are not so in reality, but composed after the style and character of the airs of some particular country; for instance, the universally known song of 'Within a mile of Edinburgh town,' was composed by the late James Hook, as well as 'Down the burn Davie love,' another song with similar title sung by Mrs. Billington, 'Down the burn, &c.' was written by Holcroft, and the music composed by Shield. The two authors, if I remember correctly, were in a coffee room, when a person present offered a wager that both lines and music were *Scottish* composition. 'Smile again my bonnie Lassie,' which is classed among the Scottish melodies, was composed by myself; as was 'Norah, the pride of Kildare,' which is called an Irish air. In regard to *Welsh* airs the case is totally different as far as I am concerned; for, being a *native* of the principality, any melody composed by me, after the style of the ancient British airs, may be considered national.

In Thomson's collection of Welsh Melodies, arranged with symphonies and accompaniments by Beethoven, Haydn and Kozeluch, two Airs were inserted, with words adapted to them, under the impression that they were established Welsh melodies; but which in fact, were my composition; one 'John ab Evan,' composed in 1802; and the other, 'The Maids of Mora,' in 1803. I have composed a number of airs after the Welsh modulation, as it is termed, and which consists of an admixture of the major and minor keys; similar to the well-known air 'Of noble race was Shenkin,' which have become very popular in Wales; but when the harpers are asked who the composer is, they know nothing about it; and, indeed, even the names of the tunes are frequently changed;—for instance, when a lady of any consequence happens to admire a certain air, the Minstrel, out of courtesy, calls it "Lady such-a-one's delight."

In a pretty little burletta, which was brought out on Monday last at the Olympic theatre, called "He would be an Actor," written, I believe, by Mr. C. Mathews, that gentleman introduced a Welch song with great success, called "Jenny Jones;" now this said characteristic melody, as the papers termed it, is one of mine, and was composed in 1804! Mr. C. Mathews heard it in Wales, and wrote the words which he sang on this occasion to it. The name which I gave it was *Cader Idris*, after the highest mountain but one (Snowdon) in North Wales, which is near Dolgellau in Merionethshire; on the summit of which, tradition says, that there was an excavation in a rock, resembling a

couch, called the Cader (or chair) of Idris, a giant and a sublime astronomer, who used to contemplate the heavenly bodies from this spot. It is farther said, that whoever passed a night in this seat, would be found in the morning, dead, raving mad, or endowed with supernatural genius. The late lamented Mrs. Hemans wrote the following beautiful stanzas on the subject.

" I lay on that rock where the storms have their dwelling,
The birth-place of phantoms, the home of the cloud;
Around it for ever deep music is swelling,
The voice of the mountain-wind, solemn and loud.
'Twas a midnight of shadows all fitfully streaming,
Of wild waves and breezes, that mingled their moan,
Of dim shrouded stars, at brief intervals gleaming,
And I felt, 'midst a world of dread grandeur—alone!
I lay there in silence—a spirit came o'er me,
Man's tongue hath no language to speak what I saw!
Things glorious, unearthly, passed floating before me,
And my heart almost fainted with rapture and awe!
I view'd the dread beings, around us that hover,
Tho' veil'd by the mists of Mortality's breath;
I call'd upon Darkness the vision to cover,
For a strife was within me of *Madness and Death!*"

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

JOHN PARRY.

Tavistock St. Bedford Sq. Nov. 2, 1836.

CHIT-CHAT FROM THE CONTINENT.

Mexico.—The Italian Company which was formed by Rossi in Italy in the course of last year, for the Mexican theatre, made their first appearance in Mexico on the 26th January last. The 'Somnambula' was the piece selected for the opening, and Signorina Pahi as Amina, Signorina Majocchi as Lise, and Mufati and Santi as Elviro and the Count, deserved the greatest credit for the manner in which they performed. The orchestra too deserves honorable mention for the extraordinary precision with which they executed the difficult music allotted to them. On the 12th February 'Norma' was produced, in which the fair songstresses Pahi and Strazze, and the Signors Spontini and Albini afforded the greatest delight. The public of Mexico set an example which the musical public of many of the great European cities would do well to follow; from the first note of the overture to the last of the finale, such perfect silence reigns throughout the audience, as is scarcely conceivable when their numbers are considered. Cesari is to appear in the 'Semiramide,' which is to be the opera next performed, and which again is to be followed by the 'Cenerentola,' in which the Buffo Fornasari will make his debut.

Paris.—From a conversation which Rossini held lately with a distinguished Parisian vocalist, it would seem that the Swan of Pesaro, as he is termed by his countrymen, has sung his last song. Being asked when a new opera might be expected from him, he is said to have replied, "Why should I write any thing more? If my opera should create a sensation, it would be nothing new to me; and if it should fail, I should be reproached with its failure to the end of my days, and vexed with myself for having risked it. No, with an income of sixty thousand francs, I can live as I please; let the others take their turn." It is said that Schlesinger, the Paris musical publisher, has in vain offered him a hundred thousand francs for the copyright of a new opera.

Prague.—Auber's opera of 'Gustavus' has lately been performed at Prague; the principal singers were Herr Pöck, and Dem. Lützer as the Page. The

principal interest, however, was felt in the performance of Herr Breiting of Vienna, who possesses a tenor voice of great strength and beauty, and who had quite won the hearts of the audiences of Prague by his performance of Zampa, Massaniello, John of Paris, &c. Bellini's 'Norma,' which had been selected by Herr Pöck for his benefit, gave great delight. In consequence of the illness of the clever and favorite songstress, Podhorski, the part of Adalgisa was assigned to Dem. Jazedé, who afforded great satisfaction by the manner in which she executed it.

Leipsic.—The 'Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung' of the 28th September, contains an elaborate review of Becker's work on the Bibliography of Music, reviewed by us in our second volume. The favorable opinion which we have expressed of that work finds an echo in the article in question, which is from the pen of the learned editor of that journal, G. W. Fink.

THEATRES.

DRURY LANE.—An audience of about forty in the pit, and an equal proportion in the boxes, were assembled on Saturday evening, at the drawing up of the curtain, to witness the performance of Miss E. Romer in the part of Amina in "La Sonnambula." Both the acting and singing of the lady were highly creditable; although it was apparent throughout whom she had selected for her model in the former. It was, therefore, excessively injudicious in her *pseudo* friends to call her forward *twice* in the course of the evening;—to a sensible person such officiousness must be almost humiliating. During the first scene in the opera Miss Romer did not display sufficient animation. Both for the character itself, and for its theatrical effect, she should produce the strongest possible relief in this division of the performance, in order that the subsequent one of her trials and adversity may appear to the greater advantage. In this celebrated scene Miss Romer was naturally excited to create the most favourable impression upon her audience; and although there was a little redundancy of action, it was doubtless a performance exhibiting throughout considerable study and cleverness. Miss Romer's voice too is of a character and quality calculated for this large house. It is strong, brilliant, and flexible; and notwithstanding that we desired a more spontaneous effusion of sentiment in many of the touching little passages in her songs, we must in justice award her sincere commendation for the neat and accurate manner in which she executed them. In short, if she display no remarkable originality as an actress, she is no holiday one, but a thorough hard worker, with much energy of character, and a more than ordinary share of useful talent.

It is not to be wondered at that the music of this opera is so popular, for it contains many melodies, or snatches of melodies that are very agreeable. The choruses too interspersed with the solos, are of the same pleasing character—appropriate and effective. The principal defect in the music is, that it is not always in keeping with the passion it pretends to represent—the great drawback in the modern Italian school of writing. Florid passages of a light, and all but joyous complexion, are at times introduced in movements, where the performer is supposed to be oppressed with grief. The orchestral adaptation is yet more out of character. Who with any feeling of propriety would think of instrumenting a *Swiss rural* opera with *all* the brass instruments in use, including the ophecleide? We were forcibly reminded the other evening of Mr. Potter's remark in our last Number,—“In some of the dramatic music of the present day, the brass instruments serve to cover many defects in the general instrumentation.” We remember a remark also of Mr. Mendelssohn's upon a similar impropriety being discussed: “The trombone,” said he, “is too *sacred* an instrument to be introduced, except upon very great occasions.”

ST. JAMES'S.—When we so frequently observe the injudicious praise heaped upon some performers at their first appearance before the public, one may well exclaim, "Save us from our friends!" Miss Rainforth, as we announced last week, made a very successful debut in the part of Mandane in 'Artaxerxes.' This is an ample and just acknowledgment of a first attempt in dramatic singing; but it would be a positive injustice towards other ladies of considerably higher accomplishment, were we to subscribe to the wholesale opinion of some of our periodical writers, that "she is the finest English dramatic singer of the present day." So flat an *ipse dixit* involves either an utter incompetence to decide in such a matter, or a want of sincerity in the decision. In the first place, to compare Miss Rainforth, as an actress, (who has appeared in one character only, and that a mere walking one) with Mrs. Wood, Miss Shirreff, or Miss E. Romer, is perfectly ridiculous; and, as a vocal artist, the comparison would not be much more advantageous to her.

Miss Rainforth has made a most favourable start, and we augur very sanguinely of her future success. Her deportment on the stage is entirely that of a lady who is familiar with good society: she does not *ape* the woman of genteel life. Her person is tall and well-proportioned; her features handsome; her general movements graceful and even dignified—her walk especially so. As a singer, she possesses a high soprano, full and sweet in quality, and we think equable throughout its compass. We should, however, doubt its capacity to produce much effect in either of the large Houses;—Covent Garden, more particularly, would try her severely; but it is fully sufficient for the sphere in which she is at present placed; and she is in every respect an ornament to the establishment. The style in which Miss Rainforth has been educated is judiciously adapted to the modern school of dramatic singing; yet it is not in the ultra school. Her pieces, although ornamented, still preserve their character, and the graces she has been instructed to introduce are in keeping with the features of the melody. This good judgment was observable in the three different airs: 'If o'er the cruel tyrant,' 'Let not rage,' and 'The soldier tired,' all which she sang in the most creditable manner; although not with that out-pouring from the heart which so eminently distinguished Miss Stephens's performance of them—above all in the first-named song. This much we have to say to the credit of Miss Rainforth, and to the best of our judgment it is her due: but we have one awkward drawback to notice in her singing; which is, that her intonation is frequently false. We strongly urge both her and her musical friends to pay an unremitting attention to this defect; or, that which at present may be the result only of carelessness and incipient bad habit, will infallibly settle into chronic disease of the organ. An evening paper has recommended the Manager of this theatre to bring out 'The Marriage of Figaro.' The new debutante is in every respect calculated to fill the part of the Countess; the proprietor himself will make a gallant Count; and young Mr. Parry will do himself credit in the flippant barber. They should introduce *all* the music, if possible, from the original;—with *no interpolations*.

On Thursday evening last, Mr. Braham performed and sang the part of Artabanus with an energy of manner, and management of his voice, that were quite surprising. He was encored from all parts of the house in the air, 'Thy father!—away!' Mr. Bennett will prove a very useful member of this company. He sang the music allotted to Arbaces with great correctness, both in style and feeling; although at times rather dragglingly: this was painfully manifest in the lovely duet, 'For thee I live, my dearest.' It was observed by some of the writers on this performance of the opera, that Miss Rainforth took the last air, 'The Soldier tired,' much too slowly. Had they stated that a great portion of her passages were mere paraphrases of the original, they had been more correct in their criticism. The fact is, that some modern singers

have taken this song in such rapid time, that they were compelled to reduce the running passages almost to slurs.—Miss Smith, who took the part of Artaxerxes at a day's notice (her sister being indisposed) deserves much praise for the manner in which she acquitted herself: we must however protest against her irreverence for the integrity of the text. Miss Smith does not possess a more refined judgment in what belongs to a melody than ARNE.

A contemporary alluding to the increase of numbers in the Orchestra, asks of what use was Mr. Willman?—where were his ears while Miss Smith was singing, 'In infancy our hopes and fears'?

REVIEW OF MUSIC.

Spohr's Quartett in G minor, arranged as a Duet for the Piano-forte, and dedicated to his friend, Mr. W. Watts, by J. W. Davison. DUFF.

IN the first movement of this very charming composition (an allegro moderato in common time) there is observable a clear, simple, and well-marked design; the author's usual, fascinating gracefulness of melody, nicely contrasted, and imitated in the several parts; with a beautiful and masterly variety of harmony; less elaborate, however, but consistently so, in this class of composition, where it is required that the march of each part should be so constructed, as to be at once perceived and easily followed.

The second is a delightful movement, in B flat major. After a charming theme of 8 bars, a second subject, of a varied and interesting character is introduced in the higher part, imitated first by the bass, and subsequently by the other parts, in a most graceful, effective, and playful manner: with which latter subject the movement is concluded, after again touching upon the original theme.

The following movement, in G minor, (Scherzo) exhibits something of the manner of Mozart's minuet in his symphony in the same key. An elegant Trio follows in E flat major.

The subject of the Finale we should not have guessed to have been by Spohr; and it may be considered as rather commonplace. But a charming fugal point is effectively introduced at page 22, which he keeps in view, and variously imitates in the several parts; and with masterly and pleasing effect, finally makes it the Bass of the original subject.

By the excellency of the arrangement (it is also handsomely brought out) this composition is rendered available to a large class of performers, and will be a source of much delight to all who may have the slightest perception of the really beautiful in music.

No apology is requisite for occupying space to notice errors (however trifling) in a composition, which, from its high character, should be perfectly engraved. At the 2nd bar of the 2nd line page 3, the first note D, should be marked as a quaver, to render the subsequent harmonies correct. Some *Binds* appear to have been omitted at pp. 22 and 23; and, as the emphasis thereon depends, they are important. And at p. 25, 3rd line 2nd bar, the G in the lower part should be sharp. Also at p. 28, 1st line, 4th bar, we think that the higher notes should all be Ds; and in the lower part, the first two quavers should be C C; the latter two, D D.

N. B. More than twenty compositions are waiting at our publisher's, to be claimed by their respective authors or proprietors.

MISCELLANEOUS.

LONDON CHORAL INSTITUTION.—The members of this Society met last Monday Evening. The selection consisted of Mozart's Mass No. 1; the

Madrigal 'Sweet honey-sucking bees;' and the 'Dettingen Te Deum:' the performance of which gave much satisfaction to the Subscribers. The Choruses were neatly and accurately sung; as was the Madrigal, wanting only a little more attention to the light and shade in the execution of it.

We recommend Mr. Travers to give his attention to the instrumentalists. He will understand us. The Mass and Te Deum were performed without any omissions.

Miss Woodyatt and Mr. Machin are engaged for the first Subscription Concert, at Burton upon Trent, which takes place on the 22nd of November.

MANCHESTER PROFESSIONAL SUBSCRIPTION CONCERTS.—The first Meeting of this association, took place on Friday Evening, in an elegantly decorated room over Bywater's Bazaar, in Peter's Street; capable of accommodating a thousand persons. The selection for performance was judiciously calculated to please a mixed audience. There was classical instrumental music to meet the taste of the more cultivated amateur; and lighter compositions to attract the casual admirer. Romberg's Overture in D; a solo on the flute by Mr. C. N. Weiss—the performer's own composition: a concert-ante trio, by Schaffner, for Clarinet, Horn, and Bassoon, by Messrs. Glover, Gages, and Molineaux, in which the player on the last instrument attracted especial attention both for his tone and execution; although all three performed with accuracy, and excellent feeling and expression. The Overture to Der Freischütz opened the second act; in the course of which, Mr. Rudersdorff (of Hull we believe) performed a concerto on the violin of his own composition. His style both of writing and execution are in the very best school. He was repeatedly greeted throughout the performance. The singers were the Misses Leach and Greener; Messrs. Standage, Cooper, and Grimshaw. Their several performances gave much satisfaction, and the audience (which was a crowded one) retired well pleased with their entertainment.

M. DE BERIOT.—The *Times* of Wednesday contains the following remark upon the paragraph on M. De Beriot, in our last number.

"This is a very foolish paragraph, and must do harm to the man it is meant to befriend, because it forces the reader to consider the facts of the case. Is it true, as alleged and believed at Manchester, that M. De Beriot gave instructions for his wife's burial two hours before she died? Is it true, as alleged and believed at Manchester, that during a part of that time, he and his medical friend were employed in packing up the jewels and dresses of the still living wife, in order to carry them away to Brussels? If these facts be true, we shall require some stronger proof than the assertion of this defender of M. De Beriot, to make us believe that such a mode of exhibiting severe grief is the custom of *any country*—that such a course of proceeding arises from a feeling of exclusive and profound love."

The paragraph in our last number, (p. 109) was written without any regard to "*allegations*," or "*beliefs*," of which the writer knew nothing; and which even now in the most essential points he does not believe; and for sufficient reasons, will not believe till he have credibly attested proof of their truth.

PAGANINI, who has been enjoying himself at his Parma estate, is making active preparations to return to London, in company with his pupil Signor Leguani, professor of the guitar. It is not generally known that the guitar was the instrument of Paganini's youth; such, however, is the fact. His early performances were as celebrated as those of little Giulio Regondi.—*Morning Post*. [It is perhaps as little known that Dragonetti is a player on the guitar. The discrepancy in the professor's two instruments reminds one of Dr. Johnson's definition of a true genius, which he compared to an elephant's trunk; "that is able to pick up a pin,—or knock down a lion."]

BRITISH MUSICIANS.—There was a trial of vocal music yesterday, by the members of this Society, with a view of selecting such as might be approved of, to be performed at their approaching public concerts.

The new prima donna, Signora Marianina Luini, who has just arrived in London, commenced her career at La Scala, at Milan, at the early age of fifteen. She possesses a fine soprano voice, and has performed with great success at the principal theatres in Italy. She has the advantage of being perfect mistress of the Italian, French, and English languages.—*Morn. Post.*

HEARING.—Through the medium of the ear and eye, we are conscious of harmony and beauty, sources of some of the most refined and pure enjoyments of which we are susceptible. In order for a person to sing well, it is essential that he should have acute audition: in proof of this remark we have only to look to the feathered tribe, amongst which the nightingale is a striking example. The general structure of the ear resembles a cavern, its form being best adapted for the reception and transmission of sound. It was probably from a knowledge of this fact in acoustics, that Dionysius, the Syracusan tyrant, is said to have caused a cavern to be hollowed out in a rock, in the shape of the human ear, wherein to confine his state prisoners; and by means of tubes communicating to his palace, he was thus enabled to hear their conversations, and hence to obtain evidence by which either to condemn or acquit them. The late Mrs. Billington was remarkable for acute hearing. It is said that she could hear not only the insects in the hedges, but also the smallest flies in a room, the quickness of her hearing amounting sometimes to a painful sensation.—*Curtis on the Physiology and Pathology of the Ear.*

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We repeat, that all communications to the *Musical World* through the post unpaid, will be refused.

WEEKLY LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

| PIANO-FORTE. | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| A bella Napoli! Rondo, J. Valen- | Cimarosa's "Il Matrimonio." |
| tine | Piano-forte and Voice |
| Barcarolle Mass ^e . Duett, C. H. | Cockney Sportsmen. Words by |
| Albert | James Smith, Esq. arranged by |
| Buonaparte's Grand March. Duett, | A. D. Roche |
| C. H. Albert | Down by the stream. Ballad, G. |
| Czerny (C.) Introd. and Rondo, | Linley |
| Op. 411. | Fanchon, the lyre girl. Himmel |
| Di tanti palpiti. Duett, C. H. Al- | J. P. Knight |
| bert | Mary's Farewell. Beethoven .. |
| De Beriot's 6th Air, arranged by | Oh forgive! Duett, W. Ball. |
| Diabelli | Oh yes there are ties. Ballad, Miss |
| Gavotte de Vestris. Duett, C. H. | Ciennell |
| Albert | Private Theatricals. Words by |
| Il Barbieri, Finale to. Duett, C. | James Smith, Esq. arranged by |
| H. Albert | A. D. Roche |
| Mazzinghi (J.) 'Winds whistle | Surnames. Words by Jas. Smith, |
| cold;' 'Forrester's sound;' 'Fill | Esq. Arranged by A. D. Roche .. |
| boys and drink about;' 'Good | The Swiss and the Baker. Comic. |
| Night.' Arranged as Duett. D'ALMAINE | By the Author of the 'Steam |
| Moscheles' characteristic tribute | Arm.' |
| to Malibran | The Swiss Girl's Song. Himmel |
| O dolce concerto. Duett, C. H. | Through the Meadows sweetly sing- |
| Albert | ing. Ditto |
| Rosa Walzer. Johann Strauss .. | 'Tis not the sparkling tear. Mo- |
| VOCAL. | |
| Ah what sweet accents. (Call of | zart |
| the Quail) Beethoven | The Statue Kings. Comic Song. |
| Away, my bark, away. Song, | W. Freeman |
| words by W. H. Graham, music | The merry Gipsy. Song. J. P. |
| by E. Woodward (Liverpool) .. | Knight |

The traveller. Glee for 3 voices,
with Symphony and Piano-Forte
accompaniments. W. Horsley,
Mus. Bac.MILLS
The Last Day. Song. Lemare...CHAPPELL
GUITAR.
One hundred Airs for GuitarCOCKS
Waltzes do.DITTO
Night at sea. Sung by Malibran.
Arranged by O. G. PhippsD'ALMAINE
HARP.
Chatterton (J. B.) Variations on
'Vi ravisio,' in La Sonnambula BOOSEY
Donizetti's 'Io l'udia.' Harp and
Piano-Forte. W. H. SteillMILLS
VIOLIN.
Kreutzer's Exercises on Bowing..COCKS

MISCELLANEOUS.
Newland's Duets. Guitar and
Piano-Forte. No. 7, 'L'Amo,
ah l'amo.'CHAPPELL
Reisiger's 8 Trios for Piano-Forte,
Violin, and Bass.COCKS.

FOREIGN VOCAL.
An dem Schönsten Frühlings Mor-
gen. Himmel.JOHANNING
Lebe wohl du Mann des Lust.
Beethoven.DITTO
Se altro che lagrime. Mozart....DITTO
Si lo Sento. Song in Faust. Spohr BOOSEY
Thänen der Zärtlichkeit. Mo-
zart.JOHANNING

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